

U.S. Embassy Quito, Ecuador
Security Message for U.S. Citizens

Personal Safety and Security

February 27, 2015

Following a recently reported attempted armed carjacking in Guayaquil, the U.S. Mission in Ecuador takes this opportunity to remind U.S. citizens of these personal safety tips:

- Be conscious of your surroundings, maintain a high level of self-awareness, watch for suspicious activity, and utilize security features like locks and alarms, and DON'T BECOME PREDICTABLE. This guidance applies whether on foot or in your vehicle.
- Bear in mind that, in general, resisting an armed assailant may prompt a more violent response. Statistically, the vast majority of victims who offer no resistance when confronted by armed assailants are usually not harmed.
- Limit the amount of personal belongings you carry with you. Carry your money in your front pockets and limit the amount of credit cards you carry. Carry only those items you are willing to lose.
- Do not venture out alone, after dark. If you wish to visit restaurants/nightspots in other less frequented areas of the city, go with a group or in pairs. Establishments with armed security personnel are highly recommended.
- While driving, keep your windows rolled up, doors locked, seat-belts on, and leave at least half a car length of space between you and the car in front of you, giving room to maneuver if something happens. Always carry your cell phone. Try not to get yourself "boxed" in while stopped at traffic lights. If you can veer your vehicle to an open lane adjacent to the shoulder or sidewalk, you will be in a better position and not as vulnerable.
- Night time travel outside of towns and cities is not recommended, due to the lack of lighting on roads. If you have to pull over on the highway, do it in a well-lit area with high visibility or in a public place. When driving outside the city, travelers should try to pace themselves with other traffic. The lone vehicle represents an easier target for criminals. In addition, overnight bus rides are often targeted by thieves who ride the bus specifically to rob other passengers.

We strongly recommend that U.S. citizens traveling to or residing in Ecuador enroll in the Department of State's **Smart Traveler Enrollment Program**. STEP enrollment gives you the latest security updates, and makes it easier for the U.S. embassy or nearest U.S. consulate to contact you in an emergency. If you don't have Internet access, enroll directly with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Regularly monitor the **State Department's website**, where you can find current Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and the Worldwide Caution. Read **the Country Specific Information for Ecuador**. For additional information, please refer to our **"Traveler's Checklist"** page. Updated information on travel and security in Ecuador may also be obtained from the Department of State by calling 1-888-407-4747 within the United States or by calling 1-202-501-4444 outside the United States.

Contact information:

U.S. Embassy Quito
Avigiras E12-170 y Eloy Alfaro.
Phone (593-2) 398-5000
ACSQuito@state.gov
<http://ecuador.usembassy.gov/>

U.S. Consulate General Guayaquil
Avenida Jose Rodriguez Bonin and Calle Santa Ana, San Eduardo
Phone (593-4) 371-7000
ACSGuayaquil@state.gov
<http://guayaquil.usconsulate.gov/>

Dialing instructions within Ecuador:

- Within the same city and from a land line use the last seven digits.
- For calls from a mobile phone and for intercity telephone calls add the city code preceded by a 0.

Dialing instructions from the United States:

- Add the 011 prefix for an international long distance line.

For after-hours emergencies, call the phone numbers listed above for assistance.